

Domestic Violence Coordinating Council

Children and Domestic Violence Committee Meeting

March 16, 2015

The Children and Domestic Violence Committee met on March 16, 2015 at 10 a.m. at the Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families in New Castle County. Attending the meeting were Secretary Jennifer Ranji (DSCYF), Tara Andrews (Family Court), Dr. Lynn Moyer (Children & Families First), Rosalie Morales (OCA), Hon. Cheryl Stallman (JP Court), Addie Asay (Family Court), Rep. Deborah Hudson (House of Representatives), Jasmine Aviles (PBH), Jerrica Boyer (PBH), Sonya Tull (Child Inc.), Abby Fischer (DCADV), Susanne Miller (Child Inc.), Dr. Vicky Kelly (DFS), Ashlee Starratt (DSCYF), Marcey Rezac (People's Place), Alana Wilder (WPD Victim Services), Ellie Torres (DVCC Staff), Natasha Smith (DVCC Staff) and one member of the public.

Called to Order: Secretary Ranji called the meeting to order.

Introductions: Introductions were made by attendees.

Minutes from November 18, 2014: Approved as written.

Old Business

Family Court Enhancement Project (FCEP)

Tara Andrews (Family Court) stated Family Court has partnered with National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and the Battered Women's Justice Project for technical assistance on this project. She also states that the FCEP budget was submitted and approved in March 2015. The Family Court Enhancement Project has two subcommittees the Access to Justice Subcommittee and Differentiation in Custody Decisions vs. PFAs Subcommittee with this project. Family Court is in the process of reviewing 100 New Castle County, 50 Kent County and 50 Sussex County files that have a PFA order and a Custody Petition to follow them through the process. By reviewing these files, Family Court hopes to get valuable data regarding custody and PFA petitions and decisions. After reviewing these files a report will be drafted providing recommendations and findings to the FCEP Management team. This report will be used to enhance training to Court Staff as well as Community partners. The Project is expected to complete data collection by the end of June 2015. The full completion of the project is expected to take place in September 2016.

Widener University Law School Symposium – Strengthening and Protecting Families

Ellie Torres (DVCC) stated that registration for the April 17th Symposium is full and organizers are currently working on an overflow room for this conference. If anyone is interested in attending the conference, please contact Ellie in order to be added to the waiting list if space becomes available. Both Local and National Speakers will be present at the conference.

Protecting Delaware's Children Conference - DV Track

Addie Asay (Family Court) provided feedback regarding the Protecting Delaware's Children Conference. She added that there were a number of Family Court Judicial Officers present for the conference. She received good feedback after the conference including a Commissioner being interested in having David Mandel come to Delaware to provide Judicial Training.

Secretary Ranji stated that David Mandel's Safe and Together Model looks at Child Welfare and holding Perpetrators that commit acts of domestic violence accountable for their actions while not revictimizing the victim. She added that if the Safe and Together Model was implemented in Delaware it would involve a system wide infrastructure change to the way things are currently done. She discussed the possibility of looking for grant funds to bring the Safe and Together Model to Delaware.

A few of those present at the conference shared that they thought David Mandel's presentation of the Safe and Together Model was good and very informative.

New Business

Presentation: Dr. Lynn Moyer – The Trauma of Removal

Dr. Lynn Moyer of Children and Families First gave a presentation on the "Trauma of Removal". Dr. Moyer discussed some of the things children experience when they are removed from their families. She also discussed the MYLIFE (My Young Life in Foster care Explained) program that helps children who have been removed from their families.

Next Steps: Safe and Together Model

Secretary Ranji discussed looking at the possibility of bringing David Mandel's Safe and Together Model to Delaware. This would include having a discussion with David Mandel to see what the groundwork would be if Delaware would implement this model.

Follow Up – Pending Action Plans from September 24, 2014 Planning Day

- 1) *Developing Guides for Frontline workers.* Secretary Ranji and Dr. Vicky Kelly will discuss this issue offline.
- 2) *Bringing ideas regarding training needs on how to hold perpetrators accountable for non-physical coercion and control.* A list of current trainings will be distributed by email to the Children and DV committee. Also, there has only been one suggestion for a training topic from the Children and DV committee which was about Visitation Centers.

Secretary Ranji also discussed adding the definition of a Perpetrator of Domestic Violence and Rebuttable Presumption to the next committee meeting agenda.

Other – Public Comment

Tim Collins (member of the public) provided comments during this section of the meeting.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date will be held after the Widener Symposium on April 17th. A meeting notice will be sent out to the committee informing them of the meeting date.

Respectfully Submitted,

Natasha Smith, 3/30/15

DVCC Staff